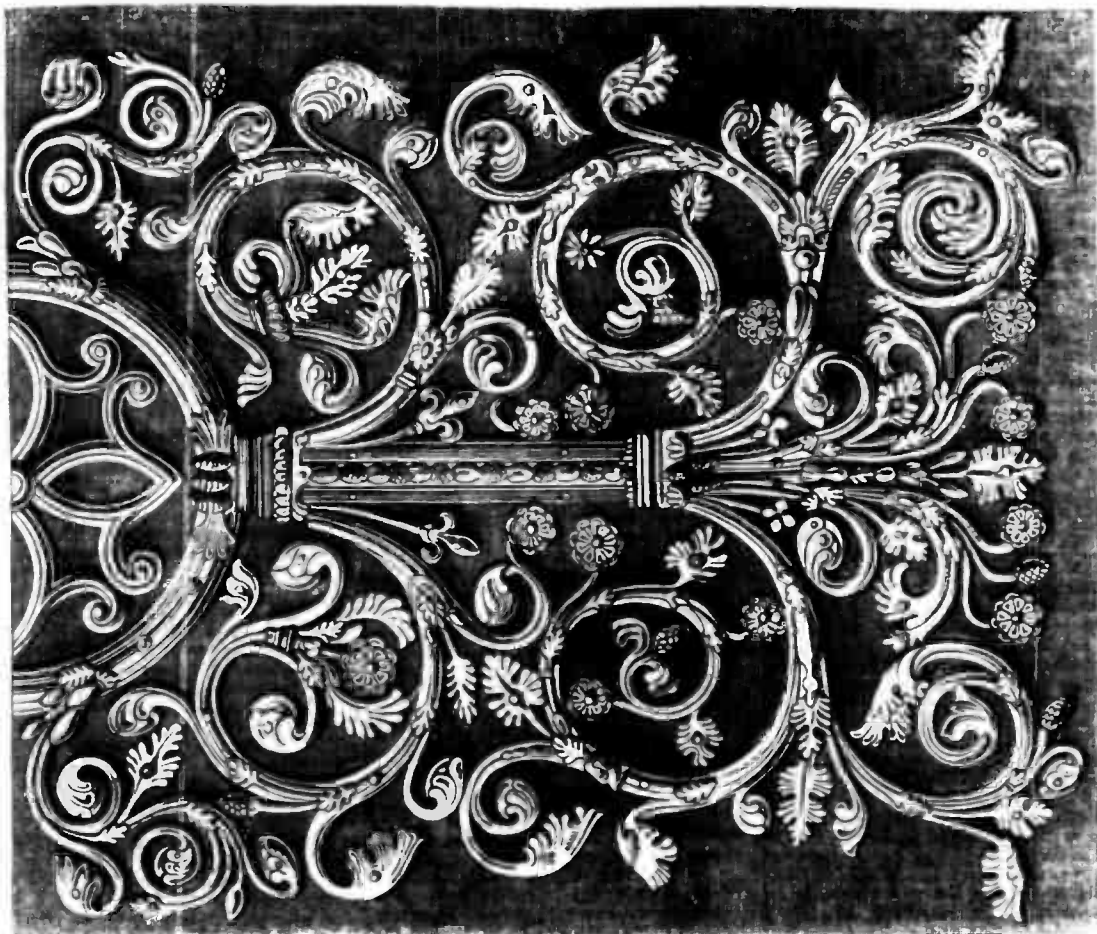


IRON-WORK FROM NOTRE DAME, PARIS.



royal origin, and its being adorned expressly for Agnes Sorel, who was born in this province. Her *goût* for the fruits of her native province is displayed by the dish containing the pears, being placed in the most prominent position. This opinion is strengthened by a close examination of the mutilated crests, where a great resemblance is seen in the female head to the one of Agnes Sorel, which is sculptured on her monument in the Abbey at Loches, and in the male head, with the features of Charles VII. as existing on the medals of his reign.

It is much to be regretted that this beautiful relic of the "Renaissance" should be so neglected. Orleans contains several remarkable mansions of this period and style, of which may be named the house built by Francis I. for the Duchess d'Etampes in the Rue de la Recouvrance, and the house of Diana of Poitiers in the Rue des Albanais.

A few doors from the house above described, in the same Rue du Tabourg, is the Maison de l'Annonciade. This edifice contains a small building in the garden, consisting of two rooms, said to have been occupied by the famous Joan of Arc. They are very ornate internally, but were certainly built at least a century after the heroine's exploits.

LORD NORTHAMPTON'S FIRST SOIREE, given on the 4th inst., was, as usual, very numerously attended. The generally received belief that the kind and accomplished Marquis will not again be put in nomination for the presidency of the Royal Society, is much regretted by some of the best friends of the society.

ORNAMENTAL IRONWORK FROM NOTRE DAME, PARIS.

The gates or doors on each side of the great entrance to the cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris are adorned with some very elaborate ironwork, the skill shewn in the execution of which, even in this day, is quite surprising, and fully illustrates the mastery which the ancient armourers and workers had obtained over this material. Our plate shews only a small portion of the least decorated part of this ironwork; the other parts are ornamented with birds, animals, grapes, flowers, and foliage. It has been a question as to the date of the execution of this ironwork. The foreign antiquary, Willemin, affirmed it was done so early as the end of the twelfth or the commencement of the thirteenth century, and this in direct opposition to the statement given by another French writer on antiquities, Sauval, whose work appeared in 1660, and who, in his account of this ironwork, states positively it had been executed about 120 years previously. The style of the ornament certainly leads to the conclusion that the latter is more correct, and as his account is curious, we shall give it in full.

"The ironwork of the two doors has at length been admirably well wrought by Biscornette, the sculptor; the birds and ornaments are wonderful; they are wrought in iron; the manner of working died with Biscornette. This artist worked in iron with an industry almost incredible; he made it simple, tractable, and gave to it all the moulds and shapes that he wished, with a softness and grace which surprise and delight all the blacksmiths. Gayart, the smith to the king (in endeavouring to discover a secret so wonderful), broke some parts of the iron off these doors, and afterwards

declared that after all the trouble he had given himself in experimenting upon it, he had become no wiser, and at the same time added, that he had great trouble in using the little iron that he had broken off.

The doors have been made for 120 years, and are admired by every smith.—the foliage is admired for its beauty, and the execution of the work is wonderful.—those in the trade have not yet been able to discover precisely the manner of working; for some think it is of wrought iron, which they call bar iron; others say that it is cast and filed; others pretend that it is beat or hammered, the most clever of our smiths contend that the iron is cast and without solder: one thing is certain, the secret was lost at the death of Biscornette, who was so afraid that they would rob him of it, that no one, as they say, ever saw him work."

Without a close examination of the iron work in question, it might be difficult to determine its exact mode of construction, but from some ancient ironwork of similar description in the possession of the present writer, he would suppose that it had first been cut or sawn out of thin iron-plate, and then beat or punched out in the back into the required pattern.

R.

LORD MORFETH'S SPEECH on bringing in his Bill for promoting the public health (February 10th), is now published in the shape of a pamphlet, and may be usefully circulated by those who are anxious to aid the sanitary movement. The Bill, it is to be regretted, makes but slow progress through the House. It will probably go into committee on Monday next.

* *Adgway, Piccadilly.*